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Correspondence.

WASHING EMBROIDERED TABLE LINEN.

SIR: In answer to the inquiry of Miss E. F. R., Easton, Pa., it gives me pleasure to say to her and others that there is a very effectual way of washing table linen, which is embroidered with Florence etching silks, without fading. Lay the articles over night in a solution of sugar-of-lead; in the morning wring them carefully and hang them up to dry. When perfectly dry wash them in the ordinary way with Castile soap. There must be plenty of room in the tub or bucket, and plenty of lead-water, so that the articles will not be crammed in, as in that case colors impress themselves on the fabric in places where there should be none. This plan has succeeded admirably with a set of embroidered towels of my own, and it gives me great pleasure to impart the information. The most delicately colored fabrics treated with lead-water as described are prevented from fading in the least. An ounce of pulverized sugar-of-lead to a gallon of water is about the right proportion. Should that quantity of water not absorb all the powder, add enough water to make it do so.

A. H. D., Washington, D. C., May 23, 1883.

SIR: I have tried the method of washing recommended by your correspondent, but there appears to be no perceptible advantage in it. In fact, you will see by specimens sent herewith that of two similar pieces, the one washed without treatment is the most satisfactory. I imagine that if care was taken to use Castile soap in the washing, the colors would stand very well, and that it is owing to the use of strong washing compounds that they fade so readily.

CHAS. E. BENTLEY, 856 Broadway, N. Y., June 9, 1883.

The result of Mr. Bentley's experiments clearly goes to show that the sugar-of-lead solution is valueless or worse. A. H. D. has evidently written in good faith, however, and it may be well for those interested in the matter to give the lead-water a cautious trial.—ED. A. A.

PRACTICAL HINTS FOR DECORATIVE WORK.

MISSISSIPPI.—(1) Wall banners are not so much used now as banner screens, which are hung from a brass rod fastened to the mantel-piece. These are always useful, and in demand. Flowers are prettier than landscapes for such purposes, though sometimes marine views look well painted on satin. Animals' heads are much used now for decorative purposes, and when well executed are very effective. Heads of cats and dogs, for instance, of horses, lions, tigers, and deer, in fact, of almost any animal, may be used, if they can be made to look picturesque or quaint. Grotesque subjects are much liked by some, such as frogs and lizards, pelicans and owls. Anything novel and original, a little removed from the commonplace, will succeed with the public, and find ready sale. Objects that are useful as well as ornamental will probably sell better than those merely for ornament, though such articles as bellows and tambourines, painted by hand on satin, are still displayed in the stores. (2) Painting on brass is newer than on satin or silk. Plaques, trays, candlesticks and other articles are displayed of burnished brass ready for decorating, and are well liked, being so much more substantial than the other materials. By writing to any well-known dealer in art materials, these articles could be readily obtained. (3) Decorated note paper is not much used now, and is hardly worth the trouble and time spent on it. (4) Designs for Prang or any other publisher of the kind may be either in oil or water-color, according to the taste of the artist. If oil colors are used, either canvas, academy, or mill-board may be selected. The canvas should be mounted on a stiff card-board, showing a margin of an inch or two, so that it may be handled without hurting the painting. Water-color paper is mounted the same way. If the design is intended to illustrate a certain motto, the artist should, of course, compose the letters, so that they will take their place properly in the scheme of the whole. The words are sometimes made a very important part of the decoration, with original and fanciful lettering. This, however, is not absolutely necessary. A good design with figures or flowers may be sent to the publishers without any lettering, and they will themselves supply whatever is appropriate.

COPYING MEYER VON BREMEN'S "EVENING PRAYER."

F., Westerly, R. I.—In copying the picture "Abend Gebet," by Meyer von Bremen, from an engraving, the following scheme of color may be employed: Let the sky be of a warm blue overhead, melting into a glow of golden light at the horizon, such as is sometimes seen at sunset. The foreground is to be partly in shadow, and must be kept rather dark. In the middle distance the greens should be bright and warm, rather yellowish in tone, reflecting the rays of the setting sun. The woman seated on the rock may be represented with brown hair and brunette complexion; the skirt of her dress a warm brown, the bodice black, and the apron dull blue with gray stripes. The sleeves of the waist showing above the bodice are white. The child has light yellow hair, fair complexion, and is dressed in a dull light red dress. Be very careful to follow the light and shade as represented in the engraving exactly, or the effect will be spoiled. The colors used in painting the sky are cobalt, light cadmium, and madder lake, with silver white, and toned with ivory black. For the brilliant greens use light zinober mixed with cadmium, vermilion, white, and black. The cool dull foreground of green may be painted with terre verte and burnt Sienna. The general tone of the rocks is laid in with raw umber, cobalt and madder lake, with burnt

Sienna and ivory black in the deepest accents. For the child's dress of light dull red, use vermilion, Indian red and madder lake with white, cobalt and black. Yellow ochre, raw umber and white, with a little black and cobalt in the half tints, will give the light yellow hair. The woman's brown hair may be painted with bone brown, burnt Sienna and white, adding a little ivory black in the shadows. For the apron use permanent blue, vermilion and raw umber with white and yellow ochre. The tone of the warm brown skirt is made with bone brown, burnt Sienna and white, with a little black added. For the complexion use silver white, yellow ochre, vermilion, light red and madder lake, toned with black. Add raw umber and cobalt for the half tints, and make the shadows with raw umber, black, cobalt and madder lake. Try to keep the tones harmonious throughout, avoiding crudeness, and, as before noted, following as much as possible the general effect of light and shade indicated in the engraving.

CONCERNING FINISH IN OIL PAINTING.

SIR: (1) What is meant by the "high finish" Alma Tadema puts on his pictures? (2) Which is the better way of painting in oil, the rough and dauby style, or a smooth surface like porcelain? Which is the more effective?

T. J. F., Oneida, Ill.

ANSWER.—(1) To say that Alma Tadema's pictures are "highly finished" means that they are painted with the greatest attention to detail, even the smallest and most insignificant objects being completely carried out. Yet all this is done without belittling the picture, as is too often the case when so much care is bestowed on the minute details. (2) The large free style of painting is generally considered more effective than that which is so carefully finished, though in the hands of a master like Alma Tadema the latter is wonderfully fine. His work is not "smooth like porcelain," however, as such a surface would rob a painting of any variety of texture, and render it monotonous and uninteresting. Neither is the mere fact that the technique of a picture is "rough and dauby" enough to make it effective. A broad, free handling, when well managed, is preferable generally in a large picture, and a full impasto gives a feeling of richness and strength. This style is much used by artists of the French and Munich schools. It is impossible, however, to say which is the better, as both have their merits and their admirers.

DECORATION OF A LIBRARY OR DOCTOR'S ROOM.

MEDICUS, New York.—A full description of the decoration and furniture for a doctor's consulting room was published in THE ART AMATEUR in March, 1882. It may be summarized as follows: Walls—Damask patterned paper in two shades of pale terra-cotta red. Woodwork—Quiet peacock blue, in middle tint. Dado—Blue-green (dark) Japanese paper. Ceiling—Pale yellow and white paper. Cornice—Tinted creamy yellow and white. Mantel-piece and overmantel, also door-head to match—Painted quiet peacock blue. Curtains—Two shades of terra-cotta red. Carpet—Shades of peacock blue. Sundry furniture in dark mahogany. Tiled hearth.

F. E., Pittsfield, Mass.—With oak furniture you might have purple, brown, chocolate, maroon or leather-covered dado, with upper portion of walls, or filling, a quiet green.

VARNISHING OIL PAINTINGS.

HATTON, New Orleans.—From what you say, we judge that the portraits have never been varnished. Certainly this must be the case, if, as you say, they came into your possession as soon as they were dry enough to leave the artist's studio. The fifteen years they have hung on your walls is long enough to account for the slight cracking of the surface. They should be varnished immediately. Two coats may be needed, as the first will probably sink at once into the canvas. Any responsible picture dealer may be trusted to do the job; or any artist of your acquaintance could attend to it. No especial skill is needed. The pictures should be in condition to replace on your walls within a week or ten days.

PHOTOGRAPH PRINTING.

B. F. F., Cleveland, O.—Printing in the sun produces softness, while printing by diffused light or in the shade, brings out strong contrasts. A strong, hard negative will require a bright light, while weak, thin negatives must be printed from in the shade or a diffused light. When the shadows begin to bronze, the highest lights should be clear or slightly darkened. If, in sun printing, the whites darken before the shadows are bronzed, it is proof of a weak negative, and the recourse is to shade printing. If, in shade printing, the shadows are fully printed before the detail in the high lights comes, it is proof that sun printing is needed.

PAINTING IN OILS.

STUDENT, Peoria, Ill.—The President of the National Academy, New York, advises the following course of study in oil painting: Begin by painting from casts. Only three colors are necessary—white, raw umber and black. A very little raw umber with the white will give the general hue of the cast; black and white will give the cool tint between the light and shadows, and the shadows may be finally warmed, if they require it, by a slight glaze of raw umber. The next step is still-life painting, as fruit, shells, utensils and drapery. For a palette Mr. Huntington recommends permanent blue, white, yellow ochre, raw sienna, vermilion, Indian red, lake, Antwerp blue, burnt Sienna, burnt um-

ber and ivory black. For portrait painting the same palette is recommended with the addition of brown red and asphaltum.

ART IN DRESS.

MARIANNA, Harlem.—In costume, certainly red in small quantities (by contrast) harmonizes with olive. So does yellow green (by similarity), and may be used in larger proportions. With an olive green dress, trimmed with yellow green, the hat, or the greater part of it, should be of the same color, with a little yellow green repeated in the hat or feather. Black or deep red stockings should be worn with such a costume.

H. & J., Long Branch, N. J.—"Beauty in Dress," by Maria Oakey (Harper & Bros.), will give all the information you ask for. As to the matter of jewelry, this writer says, for instance: "A little pale woman in flashing diamonds is absurd; the silent pearl, the dull, soft turquoise, the evasive, mysterious opal, even the little inexpensive moonstone, the green chalcedony, the topaz, the amethyst—especially with a velvet surface or finish (what the French call 'défacée'); even amber, or pale tea-colored coral—all these as ornaments are becoming to ninety-nine women, where the diamond is becoming to the one hundredth."

SUNDRY QUERIES ANSWERED.

ARTHUR C., Lansingburg, N. Y.—Mastic varnish is used for oil painting.

BRUTUS, Cairo, O.—Yellow contrasts with purple and harmonizes with orange and pale colors.

P. H., Trenton.—Some useful hints on picture cleaning and restoring were published in this magazine in April, 1880.

P. F., Troy, N. Y.—"Robertson's Medium" is used in painting on satin. Ox-gall is employed only with water-colors.

PAINTER, Troy, N. Y.—For cornice decoration to produce a good maroon, mix Indian red with Prussian blue, or ultramarine.

T. E. R., Philadelphia.—Fine gray stoneware clay is the best for modelling. It may be bought at any stoneware pottery for two or three cents a pound.

SUBSCRIBER, Brooklyn.—The Paris Salon catalogue for 1879 was out of print, but a new edition was printed. It may be had of J. W. Bouton, 706 Broadway, New York.

P. F., Utica.—Ink is not easily removed from a water-color drawing. Nothing can be done but to use the scraper, and afterward stipple over the abrasion.

HECTOR, Charleston, S. C.—Keep the clay in a wooden pail with a tight cover. When set aside for a while, it should be sprinkled with water, and a wet cloth thrown in on the top of it, to prevent the moisture from evaporating.

H. H., New York.—"Attiring the Bride," by J. Lefebvre (illustrated, p. 5, in THE ART AMATEUR, June, 1882), is owned by Mr. William H. Vanderbilt. It was in the Paris Salon of last year. "The Dew—a Dream," by the same artist, is in the William Astor gallery.

CONVENT, Georgetown, D. C.—(1) The flat or broad burnisher is best for bringing up large flat masses in gold, and if the gilding be done with shell gold, it should alone be used, without raising preparation. (2) Green is valuable for lighting up, but should be used sparingly. It should never be employed for its own value, but only from its power on other tints.

SUPPLEMENT AND JEWELRY DESIGNS.

PLATE 276—"Daisies"—is the fifth of the series of wild-flower designs for dessert-plates to be outlined and painted in flat colors. The white of the china will serve for the white petals. For the centres of the flowers use a wash of silver yellow; this when dry may be lightly stippled with orange yellow and brown green. For the stems, buds and calyx of flowers, use a rather light green (a little brown green with apple green). For the leaves use a darker shade of green (apple green, brown green and emerald green). For the background add a little flux to emerald green. Outline all the details.

PLATE 277 is a set of designs for wood-carving—horizontal lines of decoration—from the Cincinnati School of Design.

PLATE 278 is a series of monograms in "C."

PLATE 279 is a collection of designs and suggestions suitable for jewellers' use. (See also below.)

PLATE 280 is a South Kensington embroidery design for a screen panel—"Lilies and Butterflies"—to be worked in silk or crewel, natural colors.

ON page 61 will be found original designs by H. L. Bouché for a peacock lace pin, to be made of oxidized silver of variegated colors; a rose-bud lace pin of gold, silver or enamel, in natural colors; a diamond pendant, which may be changed in shape to suit the sizes of the stones to be set; four class rings set with stones, upon which mottoes, dates or emblems may be engraved; a crescent lace pin, gold or enamel; a silver lace pin representing a canoe; a chased gold lace pin; two chatelaines made of round gold or silver wire; two scarf pins for groomsmen, which, placed on bars, would make lace pins to match for bridesmaids; a prize badge for a glass ball shooting contest; three lace pins of variegated colors, in either gold or silver; two class pins; a bracelet all gold or with stones set in the crescent, and another bracelet of chased and colored gold.